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General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session

Official Records

80th plenary meeting
Thursday, 26 February 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 9 and 13 (*continued*)

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/69/3/Rev.1)

Draft resolution (A/69/L.53)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

(a) Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

The President: In connection with agenda item 9, I would like to recall that, pursuant to resolution 58/316, of 1 July 2004, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2014, to consider agenda item 9 in its entirety in plenary, on the understanding that the administrative, programme and budgetary aspects should be dealt with by the Fifth Committeee. At the same meeting, the Assembly took note of the clarification that, in implementing resolution 58/316 to consider agenda item 9 in its entirety in plenary, the relevant parts of chapter I of the report that deal with agenda items already allocated to the Main Committees would be considered by the Committee concerned for final action by the General Assembly.

In connection with sub-item (a) of agenda item 13, members will recall that, pursuant to resolution 57/270 B, the Assembly decided to consider, under the item, the chapters of the annual report of the Economic and Social Council relevant to the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, including through the participation in its discussions of the President of the Council.

Under agenda item 9, the Assembly has before it the report of the Economic and Social Council circulated in document A/69/3/Rev.1. Under the same item, the Assembly also has before it a draft resolution entitled, "A global geodetic reference frame for sustainable development", issued as document A/69/L.53.

Permit me now to make a brief statement.

The report before us synthesizes the significant accomplishments of the Economic and Social Council realized through the course of last year. It also shows the ongoing implementation of the Council's reform. The substantive theme chosen for the 2014 session, "Addressing ongoing and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future", was most important and pertinent. It provided specific focus as the Economic and Social Council continues to enhance its contribution to the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the post-2015 development agenda. The Council's work in this area will be invaluable as we move forward with the negotiations on the new development agenda.

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The 2014 Economic and Social Council session yielded several other important outcomes, including the decision to enhance global cooperation in providing technical assistance for the development of a global reference frame which can contribute to more accurate measuring of the changing planet, with potential economic and environmental benefits. In addition to its traditional operational activities and humanitarian segments, the Council also held the first meeting of its integration segment last year, focusing on the important issue of sustainable urbanization. The Council's high-level segment in 2014 was successful and hosted the important meeting of the Development Cooperation Forum, the high-level policy dialogue with international financial and trade institutions and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The joint meetings of the Economic and Social Council and the Second Committee also provided useful insights on several topics, including the sovereign debt crisis and the renewed global partnership for development. These meetings also promoted a spirit of coherence and coordination in our work.

As the Assembly well knows, the year 2015 will be a landmark for the United Nations, particularly for those directly involved with sustainable-development issues. Resolution 68/1 recognized the leading role of the Economic and Social Council in identifying emerging challenges and promoting reflection, debate and innovative thinking on development. In this context, the Council's work continues to provide an invaluable contribution towards our efforts to formulate an integrated and unified development framework, as well as to the advancement of stronger linkages among the activities of the United Nations system.

Going forward, we will need greater emphasis on the role of the High-level Political Forum in the follow-up and review of the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. This will require even greater and stronger coordination and cooperation between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. I look forward to continued collaboration between the Assembly and the Council throughout the current session.

I now give the floor to the President of the Economic and Social Council, His Excellency Mr. Martin Sajdik, to introduce the report of the Council.

Mr. Sajdik (Austria), President of the Economic and Social Council: It is an honour to introduce the 2014 report of the Economic and Social Council, contained in document A/69/3/Rev.1, to the General Assembly. Before introducing the report, I would like to profoundly thank my colleagues in the Bureau of the Council: Ms. María Emma Mejía Vélez of Colombia, Mr. Vladimir Drobnjak of Croatia, Mr. Oh Joon of the Republic of Korea, and Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari of Tunisia. I would also like to thank the previous members of the Bureau, Ibrahim Dabbashi of Libya and Mr. Carlos Enrique García González of El Salvador.

This is a historic time. The international community continues to accelerate its efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and the crafting of the post-2015 development agenda is in full swing. The universality of the post-2015 development agenda signifies that the agenda will have a global reach, applicable to all countries. Universality is also recognition of the growing interdependence in today's world. The principle of integration will be at the core of the post-2015 development agenda. Integration is also at the centre of the work of the the Economic and Social Council system, at both the conceptual and analytical levels of policy, as well as in its implementation. The Assembly's discussion today of the Council's 2014 report offers an opportunity to engage in a reflection on the substantive policy guidance of the Economic and Social Council system.

The year 2014 was the first year of the new Economic and Social Council, arising from the General Assembly's strengthening of the Council. The Assembly initiated a year-and-a-half transitional cycle that will culminate in the Council's high-level segment this July. The transitional period is stretched over 18 months. I am honoured to be presiding over the Council for this entire period.

The new Economic and Social Council is the most important instrument at the intergovernmental level for pursuing the twin objectives of eradicating poverty and achieving the integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The year 2014 was the first in which the Council convened its new platforms, including the convening of the High-level Political Forum under the auspices of the Council and the new integration segment. These were pursued together with the full range of the Council's existing platforms and processes, including the Development Cooperation Forum, the Financing for Development follow-up process, the work of the Council's functional commissions and expert bodies, the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review follow-

up process, and the Economic and Social Council Dialogue on the Longer-term Positioning of the United Nations Development System.

The Economic and Social Council is now well on its way to be fit for purpose for the post-2015 development agenda. All of its instruments have their own distinctive roles, interplay and division of labour. Taken together, they are ready to advance ownership, engagement, implementation and follow-up and review at the global level. I believe that the whole of the Economic and Social Council system, including the High-level Political Forum, can and will deliver better results for humankind.

In 2014, the Council supported the transition to the post-2015 development agenda through the main theme of "Addressing ongoing and emerging challenges for meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future". The Economic and Social Council system considered the theme throughout its work during the 2014 session, culminating in the Council's high-level segment and the ministerial-level High-level Political Forum in July. The meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, held under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, addressed key aspects of that transition through its aligned theme, "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and charting the way for an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, including the sustainable development goals".

The Economic and Social Council also addressed the 2014 theme and the transition to the post-2015 development agenda through its segments and forums, including the Development Cooperation Forum and the Financing for Development follow-up process. The related theme of the 2014 integration segment was "Sustainable Urbanization". The segment brought together Member States, the Economic and Social Council system, civil society and the business and philanthropic sectors to focus on its economic, social and environmental dimensions.

(*spoke in French*)

In 2014, the Economic and Social Council afforded various development players an opportunity to join forces to drive forward sustainable. To do that it carried out the following actions: a review of the 2014 theme, including obstacles to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and sustaining gains in future, particularly through national voluntary presentations from various countries; facilitating the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in sustainable urbanization; initiating a dialogue on ways to ensure that the United Nations development system can adapt its activities more effectively and efficiently to the evolving development landsacpe; achieving progress in the area of development cooperation by focusing on priority issues for action with a view to achieving concrete results; considering jointly with the General Assembly the role and features of multistakeholder partnerships in implementing a post-2015 development agenda; enabling youth, who represent one quarter of the world's population, to participate in the international dialogue on development; tackling the Ebola crisis and linking the emergency Ebola response in West Africa to longer-term endeavours to strengthen health systems; and strengthening the coordination of the humanitarian assistance provided by United Nations bodies.

I am especially pleased that discussions on humanitarian affairs have been an essential part of the Economic and Social Council since 1998, giving a humanitarian dimension to the work of the United Nations.

The Council also launched an open and inclusive dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system, the primary objective being to make the system fit for purpose and ready to support the implementation of a universal and unified development agenda. That is another area where the Council could potentially show the way forward.

(*spoke in Russian*)

The Economic and Social Council will continue to make efforts to advance a rights-based approach to sustainable development, the rule of law and access to justice, as well as to strengthen implementation and review. The Economic and Social Council provides a global platform for bringing together all stakeholders and advancing an integrated approach to the development of a unified and universal agenda. The Economic and Social Council serves as a unifying platform for our substantive areas of work, as well as between national and global development action.

The Economic and Social Council's unifying platform includes the work of the entire Economic and Social Council system, including the functional and regional commissions and various expert bodies, and the newly established High-level Political Forum, which covers a broad range of substantive areas. The

Economic and Social Council system is an interlocking framework that connects functional and regional commissions, expert bodies and specialized agencies. They all have clear, distinctive roles and divisions of labour. Thanks to the recent strengthening of the Economic and Social Council by the General Assembly, we now have a main, annual theme to guide and support harmonized, coordinated and integrated work within the Economic and Social Council system.

We need to ensure that the individual follow-up processes are aligned and facilitate coherent and unified implementation in terms of analysis and policy. The annual theme of the Economic and Social Council serves to align and connect the broad analytical work of the Economic and Social Council system, culminating in the high-level segment. The High-level Political Forum, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, also aligns its theme with the annual theme of the Council.

We have an important and challenging task before us. In the post-2015 era, we must mobilize our common resources and energy to face our two major challenges, namely, the fate of humankind and the fate of our planet. We have a shared responsibility for doing so. In order to provide strategic, substantive guidance, the United Nations needs a strong General Assembly and Economic and Social Council system.

Today's dialogue, informed by the 2014 report of the Economic and Social Council, moves us forward in our quest for sustainable development and a world without poverty. The Assembly can count on me and the entire Economic and Social Council system to facilitate our work and the implementation of that common vision.

The President: I thank the President of the Economic and Social Council for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Fiji to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.53.

Mr. Thomson (Fiji): I cannot repeat the impressive linguistic feats of the President of the Economic and Social Council, unless the interpreters understand the Fijian language — in which case I could speak a bit of Fijian.

It is my honour this morning, on behalf of its 44 sponsors, to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.53, entitled "A global geodetic reference frame for sustainable development", under agenda item 9, entitled "Report of the Economic and Social Council".

The delegation of Fiji wishes to first thank all Member States for their support throughout the consultation process. By way of introduction, the draft resolution before the Assembly stems from the texts previously adopted by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management and by the Economic and Social Council in August and November, respectively, last year. The current text preserves the essence of what the Committee of Experts had intended for this initiative, namely, to leverage the importance of a globally coordinated approach to geodesy based on the premise of equitably measuring the location, shape, rotation and gravitational field of the planet. As the planet revolves in constant motion, a point of reference is needed. Geodesy provides that through an accurate and stable coordinate reference frame to relate measurements taken at different times and locations. Recognizing that no one country can do that alone, a common global geodetic reference frame will enable multilateral cooperation in geodesy, including through the open sharing of geospatial data, further capacity-building in developing countries and the establishment of international standards and conventions.

We take this opportunity to emphasize the important role played by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, which the Economic and Social Council established in 2011 to develop the proposed road map that will establish the common global geodetic reference frame. The information to be derived from this important work will benefit the international community's development work, as it will be fundamental to satellite remote sensing, by which changes in populations, ice caps, oceans and the atmosphere can be tracked over time. Such geospatial measurements will support sustainable development policy-making, climate change monitoring and natural-disaster management, and will also have a wide range of applications for transport, agriculture and construction.

As a small island developing State, Fiji is vulnerable to increasingly severe natural disasters, sea-level rise and other problems triggered by climate change. We use geodetic data for our disaster preparedness action plans, and greatly appreciate the importance of critical geospatial infrastructure and information in helping countries such as ours make more informed evidence-based decisions on mitigation and preparedness.

Furthermore, as a troop-contributing country to United Nations peacekeeping missions, we believe that increased accuracy and sustainable geospatial information will ensure that Blue Helmets operate with more reliable evidence-based data, thereby leading to greater effectiveness in United Nations peacekeeping missions.

In this critical year of determining the global course of action to improve people's lives and protect the planet for the next 15 years, the adoption of this draft resolution will do its bit to enable us to achieve the goals of the post-2015 development agenda. Practical solutions and international cooperation will be integral to the achievement of the sustainable development goals, and the establishment of the global geodetic reference frame for sustainable development will be a trustworthy tool in helping deliver those solutions in a spirit of international cooperation.

Finally, the delegation of Fiji wishes to thank all Member States that have sponsored this draft resolution for their support throughout. We look forward to its adoption.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Ms. Klausa (European Union): The European Union (EU) and its member States would like to thank the President of the Economic and Social Council for introducing the Council's report (A/69/3/Rev.1). We commend the work of the Council during the reporting period and recognize the leadership of its President, Mr. Martin Sajdik of Austria, as well as the dedication of the entire Bureau. We would also like to acknowledge with gratitude the support that the Secretariat provided to the Council.

We are very much aware of the challenges faced by the presidency of the Economic and Social Council, the Bureau and the Secretariat during this period of transition and reform. We have seem much progress over the past year. We should strive to build upon that progress to make the Economic and Social Council even more relevant, effective and efficient. In this particularly important year, which will include ongoing discussions on, inter alia, the post-2015 development agenda, financing for development, and climate change, which of course are of great interest and significance to the Economic and Social Council system, the EU and its member States will actively participate in and support the work and activities of the Council.

Mr. Mackay (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Belarus is convinced that the Economic and Social Council is uniquely endowed with the capacity for integrated consideration of all aspects of sustainable development. It is the key United Nations forum for developing collective approaches to address the inherent socioeconomic problems of the future sustainable development goals, having shown its relevance during debates on the new development agenda.

At the first meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, last year, Member States shared their vision of the difficulties inherent in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and possible solutions. Belarus hopes that the Forum will become an additional opportunity for Member States to fully participate in discussions on strategic development issues of development, and that it will help to boost interaction between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in that regard.

We need to discuss issues of interest to all categories of States, including middle-income States, in the Forum. The success and experience of middle-income countries should assist the transition of the least-developed countries to a higher development category. Efforts are needed not only from the States themselves,but the international community as well, to promote sustainable development in middle-income countries. We will work with interested countries so that this topic has a place on the United Nations and Economic and Social Council agenda.

Our delegation supports the process of strengthening cooperation between the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, with a view to finding joint ways to implement the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the future development agenda. We anticipate that joint decisions will be geared to developing practical steps to ensure the sustainability of the global economy overall, and national economies in particular.

Moreover, we need to reflect on how to implement the often-heard proposal to establish a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council for financing for development. It is very important that the resources pledged by developed countries and confirmed by the

Monterrey Consensus become a reliable factor in the financing system.

Alhough official development assistance adds to the internal resources of recipient countries, the mobilization of those resources cannot fully eliminate the need for the former. We should be alarmed by the growing tendency to de-emphasize the importance of official development assistance. At the same time, a number of States are forced to address development issues while also facing the application of unilateral economic, trade or other financial measures that contradict the norms of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and also hinder the full implementation of the internationally agreed MDGs.

We would look forward to finding a long-term solution to the issue of financing the agenda in the post-2015 period at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Addis Ababa.

Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia): It is an honour to speak on the introduction of the 2014 report of the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly (A/69/3/Rev.1). First and foremost, I wish to thank the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Sajdik, and my colleagues on the Council's Bureau and in the Secretariat for our collaborative work. I would like to highly commend their efforts. It is a true pleasure working with them.

The General Assembly, in its recent strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, decided that the Council would adopt an annual main theme that will serve as its guiding substantive focus. The theme will serve to support harmonized, coordinated and integrated work within the Economic and Social Council system, so I think that we need to ensure that the work of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council together provides substantive policy guidance and contributes to and facilitates the coherent, unified implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

We are pleased to see that the entire Economic and Social Council system is now aligning, to the extent possible, its work to the main theme of the Economic and Social Council. This connects the analytical work of the Economic and Social Council system to the high-level segment and the High-level Political Forum when it is convened under the auspices of the Council.

The report before us is an important one, and this is an important year. The year 2015 has tremendous transformative potential and power for reasons we all know, and the Economic and Social Council has a fitting place in it. Croatia, as a member of the Economic and Social Council, is responsible for streamlining the work of the integration segment, so I should like to say a few words on that matter.

In 2014, the integration segment was still a novel part of the work of the Economic and Social Council, but we successfully organized and conducted meetings on sustainable urbanization. The integration segment quickly proved to be worthy and relevant. This year, the integration segment will take place from 30 March to 1 April, and will address the issue of employment, with a focus on the creation of decent work for all. I look forward to another rich debate that will once again demonstrate the unbreakable synergy between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development.

Finally, I would like to end by once again commending the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Sajdik, for his efforts and the results achieved under his able guidance.

Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea): My delegation welcomes the 2014 annual report of the Economic and Social Council (A/69/3/Rev.1). We would like to commend the leadership of Ambassador Martin Sajdik, President of the Economic and Social Council, and also express our appreciation for the Secretariat's support during this period of transition, which is part of the strengthening of the Council.

The Economic and Social Council is now mandated to serve as the platform for the coordination of global, regional and national development activities and to connect the individual, follow-up and review processes in order to optimize mutual reinforcements across the development agenda as a whole. We believe that the efforts made for further integration during this transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals will serve to make the Economic and Social Council fit for its role in the implementation of the transformative and universal development agenda.

We have learned from many discussions that a transformative and ambitious post-2015 development agenda can be achieved only through a genuine partnership engaging different development actors. In that regard, we need to utilize the strength and expertise of the Economic and Social Council, which arise from its collaboration with its subsidiary bodies,

including the functional and regional commissions. As the Council's President indicated, 2014 saw the introduction of the new Economic and Social Council, and new platforms have been introduced into the work of the Council.

Looking back at the major developments throughout the work of the Economic and Social Council in 2014, the new integration segment and the High-level Political Forum, under the Council's auspices, are especially noteworthy. The first-ever integration segment in 2014 provided a unique platform for Member States, the United Nations system, civil society and other stakeholders to promote effective collaboration among them and, in particular, to focus on how to achieve sustainable urbanization by incorporating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The High-level Political Forum, which met under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council last year, represents an important reform that offers a new multilateral architecture to respond to sustainable development challenges.

As a member of the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council, I have experienced first-hand the positive impact of the Council's work. My delegation is pleased to be able to count on the entire Economic and Social Council system to bring together all development actors for the achievement of the sustainable development goals and the successful implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. The Republic of Korea reaffirms its commitment to our common endeavours in that regard.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.53, entitled "A global geodetic reference frame for sustainable development".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I would like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of A/69/L.53: Austria, the Bahamas, Costa Rica, Guyana, Iceland, Indonesia, Italy and Serbia.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.53?

Draft resolution A/69/L.53 was adopted (resolution 69/266).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to take note of the report of the Economic and Social Council contained in document A/69/3/Rev.1?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 9 and sub-item (a) of agenda item 13.

Agenda item 129

Seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War

Draft resolution (A/69/L.52)

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/69/L.52.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation): The delegation of the Russian Federation has the honour to introduce on its own behalf, and on behalf of a large group of sponsors, the draft resolution contained in document A/69/L.52, entitled "Seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War".

This year we will celebrate the commemoration of a famous date — the seventieth anniversary of the great victory of the Second World War. It was a war unprecedented in its scope and cruelty, and one that turned into a terrible tragedy for the peoples of the entire world. Our quest to spare future generations from the tragedy of a war that brought great grief and suffering to people helped us establish the United Nations and today's system of international relations. The very term "United Nations" first appeared in the years of the Second World War. The States of the anti-Hitler alliance called themselves that. With great effort and at great cost, 70 years ago we managed to repel that terrible threat to the very foundation of civilization. We cannot forget the price we paid or the horrendous atrocities of the Nazis and their accomplices in the Second World War.

The international criminal justice system that was established after the war made it possible to judge the many crimes against humanity and war crimes that had been committed. Time has demonstrated the correctness and great significance of that judgement. However complex and acute the challenges since the end of the Second World War have been, honouring the

deeds of the people of all countries who courageously fought against fascism and militarism is a duty to cherish. Ours was a common victory that we are not only entitled to, but must be proud of. Our common obligation is to remember the bitter lessons of the war and to help keep its memories alive, not to allow for historical revisionism or attempts to rewrite it.

Draft resolution A/69/L.52 continues the United Nations tradition of celebrating the anniversary of the end of the Second World War. We are maintaining the tradition of broad sponsorship by Member States representing all regions of the world. We hope that we will also maintain the tradition of unanimously adopting the draft resolution.

Paragraph 1 of the draft resolution calls on all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and individuals to observe these days in an appropriate manner to pay tribute to all victims of the Second World War. Paragraph 2 is a request to hold a special solemn meeting of the United Nations in the second week of May 2015 in commemoration of all victims of the war. We would suggest holding that meeting on 5 or 6 May.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Van Den Akker (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

Soon we will commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, a tragic chapter in the history of Europe and of the whole world. Our consideration of draft resolution A/69/L.52 is a fitting way for us to mark this commemoration. We should never forget the horrors of the past and the cruelty of war to prevent ourselves from repeating them. We have the responsibility of ensuring that such atrocities will never reoccur. We also have to remember the sacrifices made and mourn all the people who lost their lives as victims of the war, the Holocaust, occupations and acts of repression. We believe that historical awareness is a necessary step in preventing similar crimes in the future.

The United Nations should be conceived of as having the aim of preserving international peace and security. In its very Preamble, the Charter of the United Nations talks of

> "We the peoples of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind".

However, we remain very conscious of the fact that it is not just the two world wars that have brought untold sorrow to humankind over the past 100 years. Unfortunately, our efforts for peace have failed too often. The European Union and its member States have pledged to work with all the States Members of the United Nations to lift those scourges and to create a more peaceful, just and prosperous world for future generations.

At the same time, we note with regret that many current crises remain unresolved. Therefore, the anniversary must remind us of our commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or sovereignty of any State. Also, it should lead us to redouble our efforts to settle disputes by peaceful means. The European Union and its member States are deeply committed to the core principles outlined in the Charter, and we firmly believe that there is no place for the use of force or coercion to change internationally recognized borders in Europe or elsewhere in the twenty-first century.

We pay our earnest tribute to the historic role of the allied forces and their sacrifices in the defeat of Nazism during the Second World War. However, we should likewise remember that the Second World War brought about painful divisions in Europe and that for many European countries the end of the Second World War brought not freedom but more crimes against humanity committed against their people.

We need to overcome the legacies of the war and build on the progress made since the end of the Second World War in promoting democratic values, human rights and fundamental freedoms. When it comes to commemoration, we should pay tribute to the women and men who fought for liberty and peace. They should inspire us to look forward with hope and to redouble our efforts for peace and understanding. Today, we, the States Members of the United Nations, must play this crucial role together.

The European Union and its member States believe that an honest and thorough debate on history will facilitate reconciliation based on truth and remembrance. We therefore appreciate this draft resolution, as it contributes to preserving the memory of the victims of one of the darkest episodes of our history.

Mr. Prosor (Israel): Seventy years ago, the roar of the guns fell quiet over Europe, and the Second World War came to a close. Today, as we mourn the human tragedy of that war, we must also recognize those who made victory possible and ensured that freedom triumphed over tyranny. We owe our freedom to the courage and sacrifices of the soldiers of the Allied armies.

I stand before the Assembly as a man who has seen and experienced war as a soldier and a diplomat and the father of children who themselves have been sent to war. I also speak today as the son of a man who fled Nazi Germany to escape the annihilation of his people. In his novel *The Young Lions*, Irwin Shaw describes the incomprehensible horror of the Second World War:

> "This time it is not a simple, understandable war ... This time it is an assault of the animal world upon the house of the human being ... I know what I saw in Russia and Poland ... A cemetery a thousand miles long and a thousand miles wide. Men, women, children, Poles, Russians, Jews, it made no difference. It could not be compared to any human action."

More than 60 million people — 3 per cent of the world's population — were killed or murdered in the Second World War. Half of the victims were civilians. Men were forced from their farms and fields and sent to the battlefields. Women were torn from their families and sent to hard-labour camps. Countless young girls and boys were denied the most basic right: the right to grow up and grow old. The scope of the human tragedy is simply unfathomable.

The sacrifices were immense — Russia alone lost over 25 million people. The Russian people faced the harsh forces of nature. They looked the brutal enemy in the eye. They pushed forward to conquer Berlin and halted the Nazi advancement. They fought so that peoples and nations could live in freedom. When history and circumstances called for bravery, they answered the call. Throughout the war, every news broadcast in Russia started with the following phrase: "The enemy will be stopped, and we shall prevail." Thanks to its courage and conviction, Russia was indeed victorious.

But there was no one country that could alone stop the monstrous Nazi killing machine. President Roosevelt's decision to send American forces and troops to fight for freedom changed the course of history. Fighting shoulder to shoulder with Winston Churchill's Great Britain was a courageous decision. Without the alliance between the United States, Great Britain, Russia, France and other countries, and the bravery of the Allied soldiers, the trajectory of civilization would have been terribly different.

On 25 April 1945, soldiers from the Soviet 58th Guards Rifle Division and the American 69th Infantry met at the Elbe River. That historic meeting of East and West signalled the end of long and bloody campaigns by the Allied Powers to turn back Nazi Germany's unprecedented aggression against Europe and humankind. Two weeks later the war in Europe was over, and six years of death and destruction finally came to an end.

Seventy years ago, in Europe's darkest hour, a third of the world's Jews were killed in the Nazi Holocaust. As Elie Wiesel once said, "not all victims were Jews, but all Jews were victims". The magnitude of the destruction is simply unparalleled. We cannot comprehend the riches of the mind lost to us by the destruction of Einstein's Berlin or Kafka's Prague. The tragedy of the Shoah is a stain on the conscience of humankind, a mockery of the very concept of a civilized world, never ever to be forgotten. The elimination of Jews from the face of Europe was not a means to further a goal, it was the goal itself.

In the darkest hours, Allied nations kindled the light of liberty. American and British forces bravely fought back the Germans on the Western front and, in the East, the 322nd Rifle Division of the Russian Army liberated the Auschwitz death camp. The steel of the Allied spirit proved to be mightier than the steel of the tanks and guns they faced. Thanks to them, the flame of liberty continues to burn brightly.

Today we are here to confirm that the responsibility for preventing atrocities rests on our shoulders. Seventy years ago, with the ashes of the Second World War still smouldering, the victors of the war came together to establish the United Nations and ensure that "never again" would not be a hollow promise. Today the values at the very heart of this institution are being threatened

by extremist ideologies that target our way of life. From West Africa to the Middle East, extremist groups have unleashed a plague of persecution, believing that by silencing individuals they can silence civilization.

The terrorists that stormed the *Charlie Hebdo* office in Paris attacked liberty — the right of every person to express himself or herself. The terrorists that targeted Jews in Paris and Copenhagen attacked equality — the idea that every person, no matter one's faith, is equal. By aiming their attacks at innocent civilians, the terrorists also attacked brotherhood — the bonds of our shared humankind. Make no mistake — freedom is under attack throughout the whole world. A war is being waged against human dignity and human rights, and we must fight back. Standing united with courage and conviction, we can turn back the tide of violent extremism and safeguard the values we cherish.

Peace and security is also threatened by Iran, the world's foremost sponsor of terrorism. That radical theocracy is working tirelessly to advance its nuclear capabilities, while explicitly threatening to eradicate Israel from the face of the Earth. But let me be perfectly clear: what is at stake is not just the security of Israel, it is the security and stability of the entire world. Consider what the world would look like if Iran were allowed to proceed. A nuclear Iran will set off an arms race in the Middle East. It will provide a nuclear umbrella that would protect terrorist groups, allowing them to act with increasing impunity. That is not the world the men and women who fought victoriously 70 years ago would have hoped for.

The Second World War taught us that the costs of inaction are simply too high to bear. It is the reason this institution exists, and it is the obligation that we must live up to. Each and every one of us has a role to play in the struggle for human rights and human dignity. We must overcome indifference. We must know what we stand for — and then stand up for what we believe in — we never indulge racism, never ignore incitement and are never silent when confronted with the warnings of war.

From the Assembly I issue a warning to the world. Do not close your eyes to the atrocities around you. Do not turn away from the animosity that ensues. It is your responsibility to speak out against hatred clearly and unequivocally. Equip the next generation with words, not weapons. Arm them with ideas, not radical ideologies. Teach them tolerance, not terrorism. War is not inevitable. It is not a force of nature, nor is it part of human nature. It can be prevented, but only if we stand together to denounce indifference and defend peace.

I would like to finish with a quote from General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in the South-West Pacific, who said:

> "It is my earnest hope, and indeed the hope of all mankind, that from this solemn occasion a better world shall emerge out of the blood and carnage of the past — a world founded upon faith and understanding, a world dedicated to the dignity of man and the fulfilment of his most cherished wish for freedom, tolerance and justice."

The duty rests upon us. If we wish our children to live in a world built on freedom, tolerance and justice, then we must stand united to defend those values.

Mr. Dapkiunas (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of its many sponsors, including Belarus, the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation clearly and convincingly introduced today draft resolution A/69/L.52, which we are about to adopt.

Speaking on behalf of a country that stood at the epicentre of the Second World War, with grief and the pain of loss embedded in our national memory, I hope that this draft resolution will not be perceived as a ritual document or a mere nod to tradition. The text of the draft resolution may indeed be similar to resolution 59/26, which the General Assembly adopted 10 years ago. However, the degree to which focusing on this watershed moment in world history is sorely needed is greater today than ever.

There is a need for a focus on the wisdom of the statesmen who found within themselves the strength to overcome ideological and political differences and to unite their countries to battle a misanthropic ideology — a focus on the heroism and courage of everyday people at the front and at the rear, and a desire to understand its origins; a focus that is not the result of mere curiosity or interest in history; a focus that stems not only from considerations for decency, but from a wish to understand how the lessons of a bygone war may help us to avoid tragic and irreparable mistakes in the future.

Today, from this rostrum, I would like to appeal to States Members of the United Nations to try to understand that this is not just another anniversary. An extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly will be held at the start of May. It will, first and foremost,

allow us to observe a minute of silence to grieve and ponder how we can manage to come together in a spirit of cooperation, empathy, compassion and awareness of our responsibility for our shared home on Earth before the first salvos in a new war are heard.

Mr. Zhao Yong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting.

Seventy years ago the Second World War brought an unprecedented catastrophe to all humankind. Through great hardship and struggle, we emerged victorious in the world antifascist war, justice finally defeated evil, and peace came to the world. China was an important member of the world antifascist alliance and the site of the main battlefield in the East. The war in China was the earliest to break out and lasted the longest. The Chinese people made an important contribution to the world people's antifascist war.

This year is the seventieth anniversary of the anti-Fascist war, as well as of the establishment of the United Nations, and the United Nations will hold a series of events to commemorate this important historical occasion. Three days ago, at China's initiative, the Security Council convened a public debate (see S/PV.7389) to discuss the issue of the maintenance of international peace and security, and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi himself came to New York to preside over the meeting. Member States responded positively to this initiative, with more than 80 countries participating and supporting our discussions on the subject.

The meeting had two clear messages for the outside world. First, the international community must use history as a mirror and reaffirm its commitment to maintaining the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Secondly, as we go forward, we must find a way to effectively maintain international peace and security in the new environment. This meeting embodies the consensus of the world community on the purposes and principles of the Charter and is the prelude to the commemoration of the victory of the world antifascist war and the founding of the United Nations. The aforementioned public debate of the Security Council was an event of the same kind as the special meeting of the General Assembly on the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War to be held in May and the commemorative meeting of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations to be held in September, which together constitute the main events for the celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and the winning of the world antifascist war. China expects the General Assembly to adopt the draft resolution commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. It is our hope that Member States will actively participate in the commemorative activities, jointly recall the lessons of history and look to the future.

We must remember the commitment to face and remember history, treasure peace and never again resort to war, in order to truly realize the grand blueprint depicted in the Charter of the United Nations and by establishing a new type of international relationship based on win-win cooperation, making our world more peaceful and even better.

Mr. Samvelian (Armenia): Armenia greatly values draft resolution A/69/L.52, which proposes the framework for the commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. We would like to stress that the draft resolution unequivocally recognizes the central role of international cooperation and of the United Nations in safeguarding peace. It also calls on Member States to refrain from the use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

With due respect to the founding document of the Organization, we must take appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace and develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, in line with the purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Okamura (Japan): This year we commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Seventy years ago, the United Nations was created for the purposes and principles enumerated in the Charter. As such, it is important for us to reaffirm that all the purposes and principles are of equal importance as we head towards the future.

Throughout its post-war history, based on feelings of deep remorse with regard to the Second World War, and through upholding all the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Japan has walked the path of a peace-loving nation that contributes to the peace and security of the world. We are a country that has consistently shown respect for freedom,

democracy, the rule of law and human rights. Our path as a peace-loving nation will never change.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.52, entitled "Seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I would like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of draft resolution A/69/L.52: Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Monaco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.52.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.52?

Draft resolution A/69/L.52 was adopted (resolution 69/267).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 129.

Agenda item 113 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments.

(g) Appointment of members of the Joint Inspection Unit

Note by the Secretary-General (A/69/106)

The President: Members will recall that, at its 55th plenary meeting, on 18 November 2014, the Assembly selected Canada, Germany and Romania to propose candidates for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit for a five-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2016.

Members will also recall that, at the request of the Chair of the African Group for the month of November 2014, the Assembly postponed the selection of the country to propose a candidate for the seat allocated to the African States. For the one vacancy from among the African States, there are two candidates, namely, Ethiopia and Morocco.

As indicated in paragraph 2 of document A/69/106, the General Assembly, by its resolution 61/238, decided that, beginning on 1 January 2008, the President of the General Assembly, when drawing up the list of countries in accordance with article 3, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Unit, will invite Member States to submit the names of the countries and their respective candidates simultaneously, on the understanding that the candidates submitted would be the candidates that the respective Member States intended to propose, to the extent possible, for appointment by the Assembly, in accordance with article 3, paragraph 2, of the statute.

Since, from among the African States, there are two candidates for one vacancy, I should like, in accordance with past practice, to consult with Member States through the procedure of holding an advisory vote by secret ballot, to select one country from among the African States to be requested to propose a candidate for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit. Although that advisory vote would not be an election, we would follow the rules of procedure of the Assembly governing elections.

If there is no objection, may I take it that the General Assembly agrees to that procedure?

It was so decided.

The President: In accordance with existing practice, the country receiving the greatest number of votes and not less than a majority of the votes of those present and voting, shall be the country selected to propose a candidate for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit.

May I also take it that the General Assembly agrees to that procedure?

It was so decided.

The President: In the case of a tie vote, there will be a restricted ballot limited to the candidates who have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the Assembly also agrees to that procedure?

It was so decided.

The President: May I remind members that the Assembly is not appointing members to the Joint Inspection Unit at this time. It is only selecting one country to be requested to propose a candidate. Therefore, only the name of one country, and not the name of an individual, should appear on the ballot paper.

I should now like to repeat that for the one vacancy from among the African States, there are two candidates, namely, Ethiopia and Morocco. I should further like to point out that, from the African States, the Gambia already has a national serving on the Joint Inspection Unit whose term of office ends on 31 December 2017. The name of that State therefore should not appear on the ballot paper.

The Assembly will now proceed to the selection of one country from among the African States to be requested to propose a candidate to fill the vacancy in the Joint Inspection Unit.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

We shall now begin the voting process. Members are requested to remain seated until all ballots have been collected.

Ballot papers will now be distributed. May I request representatives to write on the ballot paper the name of the one State for which they wish to vote. Ballot papers containing more than one name will be declared invalid. If a ballot paper contains the name of a Member State that does not belong to the relevant region, that ballot paper will be declared invalid. Ballot papers bearing the name of an individual shall not be counted.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Subotic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Mr. Díaz Reina (Colombia), Mr. Aliu (Ghana), Mr. Zamporlini (Italy), Mr. Fawundu (Sierra Leone) and Mrs. Thanarat (Thailand) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Mrs. Baaro (Kiribati), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was suspended at 11.30 a.m. and resumed at noon.

The Acting President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Number of ballot papers:	184
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	184
Abstentions:	0
Number of members present and voting:	184
Required majority:	93
Number of votes obtained by each Member State:	
Morocco	131
Ethiopia	53

Having obtained the greatest number of votes and not less than a majority of the votes of those present and voting, Morocco has been selected to propose a candidate for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit.

I thank members for their advice and I thank the tellers for their assistance.

In accordance with article 3, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, Canada, Germany, Morocco and Romania will be requested to submit the names of candidates and their curricula vitae highlighting the candidates' relevant qualifications for the tasks ahead.

I would like to remind members that, in accordance with resolution 59/267, of 23 December 2004, the candidate should have experience in at least one of the following fields: oversight, audit, inspection, investigation, evaluation, finance, project evaluation, programme evaluation, human resources management, management, public administration, monitoring and/or programme performance, as well as knowledge of the United Nations system and its role in international relations.

After holding the appropriate consultations described in article 3, paragraph 2, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, including consultations with the President of the Economic and Social Council and with the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairman of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the President of the General Assembly

will submit the names of the candidates to the Assembly for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (g) of agenda item 113.

The President: A representative has requested to make a statement in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that statements made in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Dibaei (Islamic Republic of Iran): I take the floor in exercise of our right of reply.

It is regrettable that, once again today, the representative of the Israeli regime has levelled baseless accusations against my country. I just wanted to re-emphasize our position that the occupation by Israel is the main source of all the problems in the region, including violent extremism. His remarks were off the topic of the resolution adopted today (resolution 69/267), on the anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Iran was one of the victims of that war.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.